

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6785

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: LEFT OPPOSITION "SUMMIT" SEPTEMBER 4

REF: MADRID 6731, MADRID 6695

SUMMARY: MADRID "SUMMIT" COULD BE FIRST STEP TOWARD FORMULATION OF COMMON LEFT OPPOSITION POSITION ON THE POLITICAL TRANSITION, ALTHOUGH CURRENT EXPECTATIONS ARE NOT HIGH ON AGREEMENT ON SUCH A POSITION AT THIS MEETING. ANNOUNCED REFUSAL OF BASQUE AND SOME CATALAN GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE ATTENUATES SUMMIT'S IMPACT SOMEWHAT, BUT IT IS CLEARLY A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL "HAPPENING." AN IMPORTANT QUESTION IS WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE THE PLATFORM FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF A TOUGH OPPOSITION STATEMENT ON PERCEIVED GOVT INDECISIVENESS ON
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REFORM AND MACHINATIONS VIS-A-VIS THE OPPOSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE OPPOSITION PLATAJUNTA, MOST OF THE MAJOR LEFT OPPOSITION ORGANIZATIONS WILL HOLD A MUCH PUBLICIZED "SUMMIT" SEPT 4 AT MADRID'S EUROBUILDING HOTEL. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST TIME THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MAJOR REGIONAL GROUPINGS--WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF THE BASQUE PARTIES AND THE CONSELL CATALAN, WHICH HAVE DECLINED TO ATTEND--WILL HAVE SAT DOWN AT THE TABLE WITH LEADERS OF THE MADRID-BASED PLATAJUNTA ORGANIZATIONS. IT ALSO IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE VENUE FOR A PLATAJUNTA MEETING HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC IN ADVANCE.

2. IN ADDITION TO LEADERS OF THE PLATAJUNTA MEMBER GROUPS, INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS, SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS REPORTEDLY WILL INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOLLOWING REGIONAL COALITIONS: ASSEMBLEA DE CATALUNA; "TABOA" AND "CONSELLO" DE GALICIA, "TAULA" VALENCIANA; ASSEMBLEA DEMOCRATICA DE MALLORCA; AND COORDINACION DE FUERZAS DEMOCRATICAS DE CANARIAS. JOSE MARIA GIL ROBLES' POPULAR DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (FPD) AND THE FEDERATION OF SOCIALIST PARTIES (FPS) EXPECT TO ATTEND AS OBSERVERS ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT CERTAIN. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LEDGER, IN ADDITION TO THE BASQUE GROUPS AND THE CONSELL, NEITHER THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (FSD) NOR THE VARIOUS MADRID-BASED LIBERAL PARTIES APPARENTLY WILL BE REPRESENTED.

3. THE PARTICIPANTS REPORTEDLY ARE STILL AT WORK ON THE AGENDA, BUT THEY ARE CERTAIN TO SPEND THE BULK OF THEIR TIME DISCUSSING OPPOSITION UNITY AND THE ARTICULATION OF A CONSENSUS OPPOSITION "PROGRAM" FOR POLITICAL CHANGE, AND PERHAPS THE DESIGNATION OF A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE GOVT. GIVEN THE HEAVY REPRESENTATION OF REGIONAL GROUPS, REGIONAL ISSUES ARE ALSO CERTAIN TO COLOR THE DISCUSSION.

4. CONTRARY TO EARLIER EXPECTATIONS OF GREAT THINGS FROM THE SUMMIT, THE MEDIA IS NOW ECHOING THE LINE WHICH PARTICIPANTS AND POTENTIAL OBSERVERS HAVE TAKEN WITH US IN RECENT DAYS: THE SUMMIT IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TOWARD THE ARTICULATION OF A COMMON OPPOSITION POSITION BUT, GIVEN THE WIDE DIVERSITY OF INTERESTS TO BE REPRESENTED AND VIEWS TO BE EXPRESSED, THE MOST IMPORTANT SPECIFIC RESULT MAY WELL BE AN AGREEMENT TO

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MEET AGAIN. PSOE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER LUIS YANEZ, FOR INSTANCE, HAS TOLD US THAT HE EXPECTS THE REGIONAL GROUPS' OVERRIDING PREOCCUPATION WITH REGIONAL GRIEVANCES TO PREVENT ANY FAR-REACHING AGREEMENT ON SPECIFICS AT THIS FIRST MEETING.

5. THE TONE OF ANY STATEMENT ISSUED WHEN THE SUMMIT CONCLUDES IS LIKELY TO BE THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE DEBATE. OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PSOE INDICATE THAT THE SOCIALISTS MAY WELL PUSH FOR

THE ADOPTION OF A RATHER TOUGH COMMUNIQUE ON PERCEIVED GOVERNMENTAL DRIFT ON REFORM AND MACHINATIONS VIS-A-VIS THE OPPOSITION. THE PSOE IS CURRENTLY UP IN ARMS OVER THE GOVT'S THREAT TO LEGALIZE THE "HISTORICAL" FACTION IF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP DOES NOT SOON APPLY FOR LEGALIZATION, AND TO WITHHOLD AUTHORIZATION OF THE PARTY'S PLANNED NOVEMBER CONGRESS PENDING SUCH A REQUEST FOR LEGALIZATION. MOREOVER, AT LEAST SOME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GROUPS ARE CONCERNED OVER WHAT THEY SEE AS A MANEUVER BY CD-ORIENTED GOVT MINISTER TO CO-OPT THEM (REFTEL). HOWEVER, OTHER PARTICIPANTS HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THEY WILL ADVOCATE THE DRAFTING OF A MODERATE DOCUMENT IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVT TO MOVE AHEAD WITH REFORM.

6. COMMENT: IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THE SUMMIT HAS LOST SOME OF ITS GLITTER AS THE RESULT OF THE FAILURE OF THE BASQUE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE CONSELL TO ATTEND, THE POLITICAL AND REGIONAL VARIETY REPRESENTED BY THE PARTICIPANTS CLEARLY MAKES IT AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL EVENT, AND ONE WHICH COULD LEAD EVENTUALLY TO THE ARTICULATION OF AN OPPOSITION "ALTERNATIVE" TO THE GOVT'S REFORM PROGRAM, WHATEVER IT MAY TURN OUT TO BE. AS PRESIDENCY MINISTER OSORIO HAS TOLD US (REFTEL), THE GOVT WILL EXAMINE THE OUTCOME CAREFULLY FOR INDICATIONS OF WHAT THOSE REPRESENTED AT THE SUMMIT WOULD ACCEPT OR REJECT IN THE WAY OF A GOVT PROGRAM.

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